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DULCINEA AND THE DICTIONARIES.

TO THE EDITORS OF MOD. LANG. NOTES.

SIRS:—The name of Don Quixote's Dulcinea, has long been of not uncommon use in English literature as a general term for a sweetheart; yet the dictionary-makers have given the word scant recognition. Only in the latest dictionaries does it appear at all. The *Standard Dictionary* and the *Century Dictionary of Names* both give it, but without citing any authorities. The *International* quotes the well-known passage from one of Sterne's letters (1765): "I myself must ever have some Dulcinea in my head." Murray's *New English Dictionary* quotes four examples; the earliest is from Smollett's *Roderick Random* (1748): "His dulcinea . . . persuaded him." Yet over a hundred years before an English author of repute had used the word. It is to be found in the fifth edition (1638) of Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy*, page 518, in the chapter on "Symptoms of Love," (part iii, sect. ii, memb. 3, subsect. 1):

"'Tis not Venus picture that, nor the Spanish Infanta's, as you suppose, (good Sir) no Princesse, or Kings daughter; no no but his divine mistress forsooth, his dainty *Dulcinia*, his deare Antiphila, to whose service he is wholly consecrate, whom hee alone adores."

The passage is of especial interest, because the words "his dainty Dulcinia" have been introduced since the previous edition of 1632, where (p. 526) the reading is "his divine mistress forsooth, his deare Antiphila." It would seem that in the half-dozen years between these editions Burton had become acquainted with the word *Dulcinea*. Skelton's translation of Don Quixote had appeared as early as 1612, but of course it is possible that Burton had not read it until this period, and thus introduced the word directly into English literature. Or perhaps he has merely borrowed it from some contemporary whose use of it still remains unrecorded. According to the index to Shilleto's edition of the *Anatomy*, Burton never cites or refers to Cervantes. The modern editions, which usually follow the sixth folio, do not indicate this, or any of the numerous changes that Burton was constantly making in his great work.

The French lexicographers, as might be expected, have paid greater attention to their dulcineas. Larousse, in particular, has a long article on the word. The earliest of his many citations is from De Bernis, who wrote in the latter half of the eighteenth century. If the word has crept into the German language, it is not recognized in Grimm's *Wörterbuch*.

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BRIEF MENTION.

"Pars est prima prudentiæ, ipsam cui præcepturus sis, æstimare personam," is a maxim applicable to other manuals than those *De Re Rustica*. A handbook of English literature¹ is not meant for the mature scholar, but for the tiro, to give him a distinct outline-map of the regions which he will later explore. Hence the writer, while he must necessarily omit much, should endeavor to preserve such points as will peg themselves into the reader's memory. The criticisms, if brief, should be sound and suggestive: and the writer, keeping in mind that he is writing for beginners, should avoid allusions which presuppose familiarity with the subject.

As an instance of insufficiency and unimpressiveness in the book before us, we may refer to the seven lines devoted to Donne. There could hardly be more unsound and unsuggestive criticism than the statement that Jonson's noble and powerful tragedies "can claim no loftier praise than that of being excellent mosaic." The art of stating facts without conveying information is well illustrated by the five lines devoted to Vanbrugh:—"The satire of Swift still clings to the architectural remains of Sir John Vanbrugh (1666-1726) in Blenheim and Castle Howard; but the *Relapse*" [and other dramas named] "still attest his wit as well as his immorality."

The book is printed in a type so minute and trying to the eyes, that we should hesitate to recommend it as a text-book, even were it otherwise the best of its kind.

¹ *A Handbook of English Literature*, originally compiled by AUSTIN DOBSON. New Edition by W. Hall Griffin, B. A. New York: Longmans, Green, & Co., 1897.